

peristoma continuum, ad margines superiorem labralemque aliquanto expansum.

Diam. max. 20 mill. Diam. min. 15. Alt. 16.

Hab. California.

This very remarkable species was collected in California by Lord Walsingham; and two specimens were presented to the British Museum by Mr. J. H. Ponsonby—a most enthusiastic conchologist, with whose name I feel much pleasure in associating the species.

It has but one relation of any proximity, namely *C. newberryi*, Lea. From this it differs in being of a thinner and lighter build, in



Carinifex ponsonbii.

the more rapid increase of the whorls, and consequently in the proportionally much larger size of the last in comparison with the penultimate. *C. newberryi* has the upper surface of the whorls broadly flattened and then acutely keeled and angulated, whereas in the present species they are rather convex, lack the carination, and display but the faintest approach to an angulation, and this is situated near the *upper* and not the *lower* suture. Again, the mouth of the latter species ascends a little on the body-whorl; in the former it descends a trifle. Finally, Lea's shell is much more coarsely striated, and clothed with a strong yellowish-olive epidermis, whereas that which invests the present species is very thin and of a very pale olive tint. On each side of the rounded keel, encircling the umbilicus, there is a shallow depression.

3. Remarks on the Genus *Alaba*, with the Description of a new Species. By EDGAR A. SMITH, F.Z.S.

[Received June 23, 1875.]

The genus *Alaba* was first characterized by Messrs. H. and A. Adams in the 'Genera of Recent Mollusca,' p. 214, and there considered as a subgenus of *Cerithiopsis*.

Subsequently it was raised to the rank of a separate genus and removed by A. Adams (see *Annals & Mag. Nat. Hist.* 1862, x. p. 294) to the subfamily Litiopinæ.

Here the shells included in the group are described "anfractibus plicatis seu varicosis, vertice submammillato. Apertura ovata, labio sæpe vix truncato." No mention is made of the nature of the operculum.

Of the species which he enumerates, *A. picta*, *A. cornea*, *A. felina*, *A. inflata*, and *A. phasianella*, Angas (since described), have whorls smooth and not plicate or varicose, and the labium exhibiting, in *A. picta* only, but the faintest approach to a truncation, the columella in the remaining species being rather straight, and generally blending into the labrum, which is slightly effuse at the base.

Thus it will be seen that the characters assigned to the genus are not quite accurately applicable to all the species which have been included therein; and therefore I would propose the following divisions, which may somewhat facilitate their identification.

Those species which have the whorls strengthened with varices (generally tumid) and the columella more or less (for this character is variable) truncated, will constitute the genus *Alaba* proper; and those devoid of the varices and wanting the columellar truncation may form the subgenus *Diala*, A. Adams, *l. c.* 1861, viii. p. 242, and 1862, x. p. 298. The subgenus *Styliferina*, A. Adams, *l. c.* p. 299, is closely associated with the preceding group; indeed there scarcely appear characters sufficient to warrant a separation. The chief peculiarity mentioned as distinguishing this form is in the apex "vertice mucronato;" but it does not differ to any material extent from that of several of the typical species.

ALABA.

Whorls tumidly varicose; columella more or less truncated; labrum thickened in the adult state.

A. vibex, A. Ad.; *A. tervaricosa*, C. B. Ad.; *A. melanura*, C. B. Ad.; *A. supralirata*, Carpenter; *A. zebrina*, A. Ad.; *A. leucosticta*, A. Ad.; *A. blanfordi*, A. Ad.; *A. puncto-striata*, Gould.

Subgen. DIALA.

Whorls not varicose (sometimes noded around the middle; columella straightish, not truncated; labrum not thickened.

D. lauta, A. Ad.; *D. suturalis*, A. Ad.; *D. varia*, A. Ad.; *D. sulcifera*, A. Ad.; *D. picta*, A. Ad.; *D. pulchra*, A. Ad.; *D. imbricata*, A. Ad.; *D. monile*, A. Ad.; *D. pagodula*, A. Ad.; *D. phasianella*, Angas; *D. (Alaba) tenuis*, Smith; *D. cornea*, A. Ad.; *D. simplex*, Smith.

Diala rufilabris, A. Ad., differs essentially from this genus in that the peristome is continuous, very much thickened everywhere, and the aperture oblique, the columella being consequently oblique also, and not more or less perpendicular as is the case in all the species in this group. Thus it will be seen that it should be removed to the genus *Hydrobia*.

With the exception of *Alaba puncto-striata*, Gould, all the species above enumerated are represented in the British Museum, as are also those species described by P. P. Carpenter in the 'Catalogue of Mazatlan Shells.' But these, with one exception, I have purposely omitted; for the mutilated condition of the specimens is such that it is impossible to say to what genus they (when perfect) may have belonged.

And here I cannot refrain, although always averse to censuring criticism, from condemning most energetically that pernicious practice of describing fragments of minute specimens and assigning specific names to them. It merely results in burdening science with a mass of literature almost useless; for it is simply an impossibility for any one to identify their specimens from the description of those miserable fragments characterized in the Mazatlan Catalogue. Describe them and welcome, for no harm is thereby done, albeit but little good; but for the sake of others let us not name them.



Diala leithii.

DIALA LEITHII, sp. nov.

Testa imperforata, ovato-fusiformis; spira acuminata, tenuis, parum nitida, sordide flavida, fasciis spiralibus angustis rufis parum conspicuis ornata, una circa medium anfr. superiorum, duabus in ultimo, altera paululum supra, altera paululum medium infra; anfractus 9, convexi, medio levissime angulati, spiraliter æquidistanter striati, striis in anfr. superioribus circiter 8, in ultimo ad 18; sutura parum obliqua, profundiuscula; apertura ovata, ad basin acuminata effusa, longitudinis totius ad $\frac{5}{13}$ æquans, fasciis externis bifasciata; columella arcuata leviterque incrassata; labrum tenue, simplex.

Operculum corneum, tenue, paucispirale, nucleo subcentrali.

Long. $7\frac{1}{2}$ mill. Diam. fere 3.

Hab. California.

The angulation of the whorls is very slight in most specimens, and in some altogether absent. The spiral reddish bands are not very observable, but are more distinctly observable within the aperture; indeed that which encircles the middle of the upper whorls is so faint as to be scarcely visible. The operculum consists of about three volutions; and its nucleus is situated at about one fourth the entire length from the inferior margin. Dr. Leith, who has kindly presented a good series of this species to the Museum, enclosed with them the following notes, which he made respecting the animal when observing it alive.

"*Lip* somewhat probosciform, not used in progression, and not usually projecting beyond the edge of the foot.

"*Tentacles* two, long, subulate or filiform, bearing the *eyes* on their outer side near the base.

"*Foot* much expanded in front and rounded, gradually attenuated posteriorly and caudated.

"*Reptation* not by alternate movements of right and left sides, but by uniform, undulating, progressive motion of the foot on the sides of the vessel in which it was captive.

"It moved also in an inverted position along the surface of the water, as *Planorbis* and *Lymnæa* do," as does also *Diala picta*.

Notwithstanding this species does not altogether agree with *Diala*, both as regards the shell and animal (that is, of *D. picta*), I deem it unadvisable *at present* to form a distinct subgenus for its reception. The differences in the shell consist in the columella being more arcuate than is usual, and the aperture more than ordinarily acuminate effuse at the base.

The animal varies from that of *D. picta* in having the tentacles of equal (and not unequal) length, the foot not auriculate, and in the four long tentacular filaments attached to the operculigerous lobe being wanting. These peculiarities in the animals certainly appear to be sufficient to dissociate them; but until more complete and accurate investigations have been made on these and other species of this genus, I shall refrain from adding to the already superfluous number of genera one so ill defined.

4. Notes on the Figures of *Herpestes ferrugineus* and *Ovis polii*. By W. T. BLANFORD, F.Z.S.

[Received July 5, 1875.]

In the plate of *Herpestes ferrugineus* published in the 'Proceedings' for 1874 (plate lxxxi.) there is a slight error, to which, however, it is as well to call attention. The animal is represented on a tree. Now all the Indian and African species of Mongoose with which I am acquainted (*H. griseus*, *H. malaccensis*, *H. persicus*, and others) are thoroughly terrestrial in their habits, and rarely, if ever, climb trees. The plate was, of course, drawn after I left England, and is, I think, a good representation of the animal.

There are, however, some very serious errors in the figure of *Ovis polii* * (pl. liii.). I have examined a series of skins brought from Kashgar; and I find that none possesses a trace of the mane along the neck, represented in both sexes in the plate; there is some long hair behind the horns, and a little between the shoulders, but none on the back of the neck. In the plate, too, the male standing up has a long bushy tail, and the female lying down has a black line down the back. Both these peculiarities, I regret to say, are due to the artist: the animal has really a very short tail, so short that in life it can

* I think this, and not *O. poli*, is the correct mode of spelling this animal's name.